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## SOURCE

Jen-min Min-chu-kuo-chia-ti Nung-yeh (Agriculture in the People's  
 Democracies), Vol I, Ministry of Agriculture, Central People's  
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DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH KOREAN AGRICULTURE

[Comment: The following information is taken from an article  
 entitled, "The Development of Rural Economy in the Democratic Peo-  
 ple's Republic of Korea," by Hyon Ch'il-chung, chairman, Central  
 Committee, Korean Farmers' League. The article appeared in a mono-  
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 tral People's Government of China.]

According to 1943 statistics, the poor farmers, who constituted 97 percent  
 of the total Korean farm population, as a group owned only 38 percent of the  
 total cultivated land in Korea, while rich landowners, who represented only 3  
 percent, owned 62 percent of the land. This feudalistic distribution of land  
 ownership, coupled with colonial land administration, had seriously hindered  
 the development of the Korean agricultural economy.

One month after its establishment in February 1946, the people's regime  
 promulgated a land reform law in North Korea. The people's regime confiscated  
 some 1,050,000 chongbo [one chongbo equals 2.45 acres, or 16.1455 mou] of land  
 from the Japanese and pro-Japanese and reactionary Korean landlords, and re-  
 distributed 980,000 chongbo of this among 720,000 landless and poor farmers.  
 The feudalistic and inefficient economy was thus replaced by a democratic and  
 efficient economy.

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After the land reform, the people's regime also carried out a tax reform by replacing harsh imposts with moderate and equitable taxes in kind. Furthermore, the regime also helped the rural economy by instituting a low-interest farm loan system, supplying adequate quantities of chemical fertilizers, building irrigation facilities, etc. Just before the Korean War, North Korea had 25,013 chongbo of well-irrigated rice fields.

The regime also opened up numerous state-operated farms, pastures, and agricultural experimental stations. By spring 1950 there were five state-operated machine-tractor stations. From 1946 to 1947 the total cultivated area expanded by 15.9 percent, and the harvested crops increased by 180,000 tons. By 1948 the cultivated area had expanded by 21 percent and the harvested crops had increased by 810,000 tons over 1946. The total grain production of North Korea in 1948 exceeded by 11.4 percent the 1939 level, which was the highest achieved under the Japanese regime. In 1949, in spite of the severe drought that year, grain production exceeded the 1944 production by 626,490 tons. Thus, very shortly after the land reform North Korea changed from a food-deficit to a food-surplus country.

This phenomenal development of agriculture, which is the backbone of the Korean economy, not only eliminated the food problem but also helped to raise the material and cultural standards of rural Korea. It also greatly stimulated the development of the light industries of North Korea which use agricultural products as raw materials. [These light industries include mainly the textile, hemp and straw products, flour-milling, brewery, and meat-packing industries.]

The war destruction was minor compared with the more permanent damage to agriculture caused by the mass murder of Korean farmers and the destruction of livestock by the US invaders. For instance, the invaders destroyed 70 percent of hog stocks and 36 percent of cattle stocks during the war, thereby depriving the Korean farmers not only of immediate food resources but also of breeding and manure-fertilizer resources and general productive power as well. Since the Korean farmers depend heavily on animal power for cultivation, farm productivity was greatly reduced by the destruction of draft animals.

In spite of adverse conditions, the farmers kept on with their efforts to insure an adequate supply of food to soldiers and civilians during the war.

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